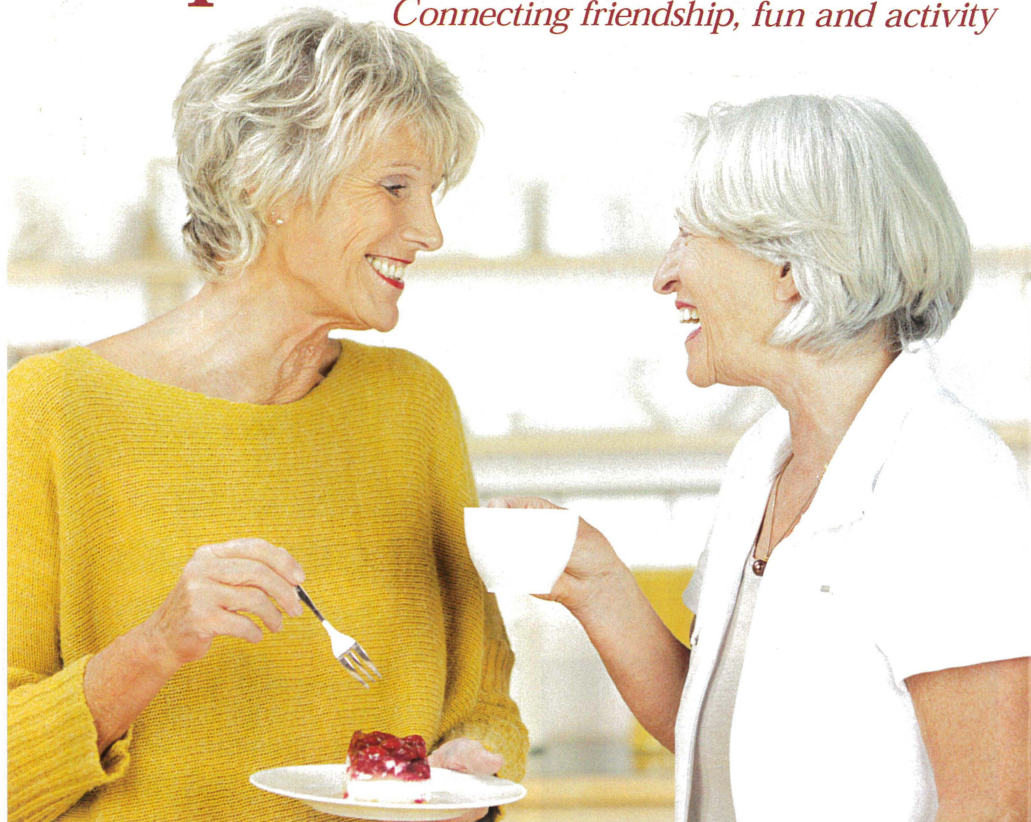


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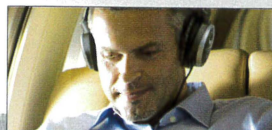
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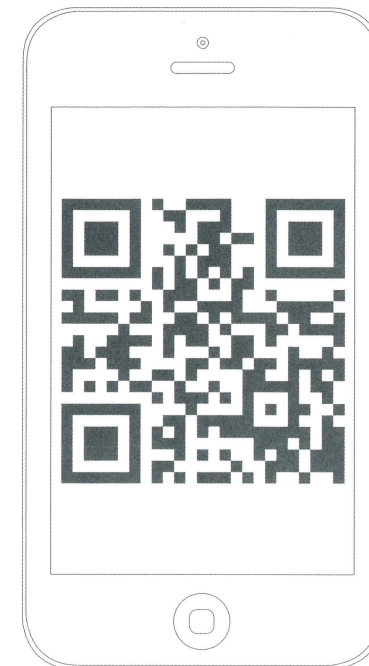
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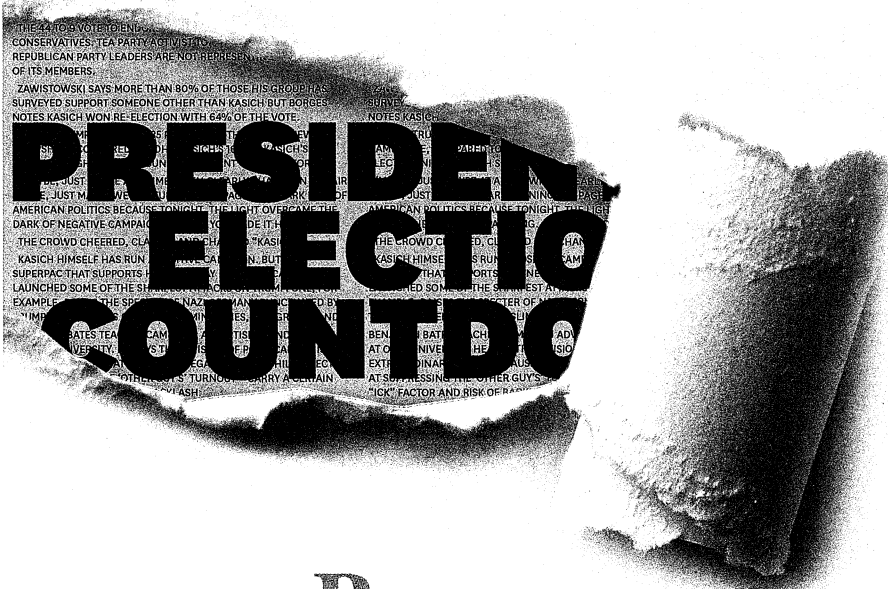
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF WEATHERVANE PLAYHOUSE

From the "barn" to Copley Road to the Valley ...

Weathervane Community Playhouse began its run in 1935. Four artistically talented Woman's City Club members – Grace Hower Crawford, Muriel MacLachlan, Laurine Schwan, Helen Troesch – and a core of charter members rented the empty carriage house belonging to Akron's Senator Charles Dick. Their goal was to present a wide spectrum of plays: classics, dramas, comedies, new works – even opera – with casting open to anyone who fit a part.

The women chose a carnival as their fundraiser to start paying the rent. Despite a drenching downpour, they raised \$60. They named their space "Weathervane" after the rooster on the barn's cupola. After cleaning their new home, scrounging for seats, a curtain and a coffee pot, Weathervane opened its first season. During that summer of 1935, the group presented seven fully costumed and staged plays. In 1936, Muriel MacLachlan, with the other founders, offered classes to children and adults, beginning a tradition that has become today's Education Department. In 1938, a Women's Board was formed to offer volunteer financial assistance. This group is now the Volunteer Guild.

The "barn" was home until it was sold. In 1951 the Playhouse purchased a cement block building at 1474 Copley Road and renovated it for a theater with seating capacity of 125. The all-volunteer organization hired its first employee, Nora Scott, as custodian/ticket manager. Actual management of the Playhouse was handled by the Operating Board, which reported to the Board of Trustees. Because directors were becoming scarce, the Board hired Bob Belfance as full-time Manager/Director. He held the position from 1961-1969 and from 1974-1992. During the Copley Road days, plays were presented six days a week. Because of their popularity, not everyone who wanted to see a show could be accommodated. A new home was planned.

During the 1960s, the membership's plans came together in June 1970 with the opening of *Dark of the Moon* here on Weathervane Lane. Longtime friend and founder Grace Hower Crawford died in 1971, remembering the Playhouse in her will. Her money enabled the Board to pare down the mortgage and set up an Endowment Fund. The last mortgage payment was made in 1974 through a contribution of the Women's Board. Three major additions followed: these included first-floor restrooms, classrooms, a costume shop, fly gallery and elevator. The former scene shop became the John L. Dietz Theater/Classroom in 2005 and the lobby project was completed in 2009 in time for the opening of the 75th season. Weathervane is proud to celebrate its 82nd Season.

MISSION STATEMENT

Weathervane Playhouse produces high-quality live theater with volunteer artists, designers, and technicians under professional direction, provides education and training in theater arts and appreciation, and engages and entertains its audience and constituents to enrich the quality of life in Northeast Ohio.

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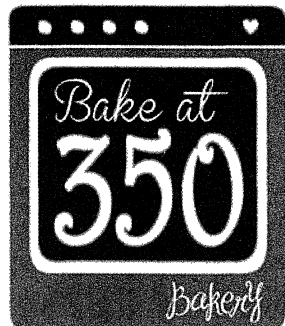


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Artwork created both by high school students and F. Jonathan Kurch, photographer

Please enjoy the artwork created by students of Woodridge High School and home-schooled students, including LGBT teens and their friends/allies, which embody and/or portray the concept of gender identity and gender expression in fine art medium.

Because the subject matter of January's production, "A Kid Like Jake," dealt with a couple's concern about their four year old boy's increasing desire to be more interested in "Cinderella than G.I. Joe," I believed that an exhibit featuring artwork by members of the LGBT Community would help put the idea of being transgendered into a different context.

All but one of the high school students participating in this exhibit are students of Ms. Chelby Benson. She is a K-12 Art Educator and Theater Artistic Director at Woodridge High School. For this exhibit she worked in collaboration with Mrs. Susan Mongold, the GSA advisor. GSA is the Gay-Straight-Alliance Group for supporting LGBT Students and Community.

"Our students are very adamant about using the arts to give voice to LGBT teens. I hope that the art they turn in will embrace this concept well. Some of the works I've received are self-portraits, which shows that these students are just normal teenagers not to be feared despite an unpopular sexual orientation," says Ms. Benson.

F. Jonathan Kurch, whose photography complements the students' work, is also a member of the LGBT community. "I hope that something in my work speaks to you. That something can be beautiful regardless as to what it started out as, or what it is believed or expected to be. That something can be strong, regardless as to how delicate or fragile it may appear. That, even though one might feel utterly alone and helpless, there are always avenues of support and help waiting for us. We just need to be open to them. And remember, take a moment to stop and notice the beauty that is all around us and within us."

Because all the artists' statements could not be listed here, I hope you will take the time to read them, as they will be displayed next to their work. Their passion, sensitivity, and desire to communicate is to be applauded. Their work fulfills my hope for this exhibit, which is to show people who are transgendered aren't to be feared, ridiculed, or persecuted.

F. Jonathan Kurch's work is for sale. He has generously offered to donate a portion of the proceeds of all sales to Weathervane. If you wish to make a purchase, please inquire at the Box Office or the Gift Shop. Thank you for supporting the arts!

Marci Paolucci
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ABOUT THE PLAY

I Love You Because is a modern twist on Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, set in New York City. A young, uptight greeting card writer's life is changed when he meets a flighty photographer. Along with their eccentric friends and siblings, they learn to love each other, not in spite of their faults, but because of them.

ABOUT THE CREATORS

Joshua Salzman (music) and Ryan Cunningham (book and lyrics) are Jonathan Larson Award winners as well as Drama Desk and MAC Award-nominated writers. Their Off-Broadway musical, *I Love You Because*, has been produced all over the world in five languages. Their new musical, *Next Thing You Know*, has been produced at CAP 21 in New York, across America, and in Europe. Their song "Just Not Now" was featured on Lauren Kennedy's solo album *Here and Now*. Ryan and Joshua are graduates of the NYU graduate musical theatre writing program and are both members of ASCAP and the Dramatist Guild.

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

As an artist, I believe that producing theatre is an act of leadership. Artists are tasked with taking risks, telling stories from the perspectives of others, and revealing to us all how others might see us – what we may look like to the rest of the world. By doing so, artists participate in the shaping of the culture we live within. Often, the most rewarding experience in a theatre is one that stimulates thought, opens dialogue, and initiates conversation.

Community Theater is an ideal place for these compelling stories to take place for two reasons. First, because we experience these stories with our neighbors, coworkers and friends. These are the people who

share our immediate world, who make decisions with us and experience similar consequences to the choices made in our community. Second, because in the theatre there is no channel changing, no pause button and no muting. Theater requires its audiences to confront and deal with the issues, story, characters, circumstances, and motivations of others.

Thank you for sharing this experience with us at Weathervane. I'm delighted to share this compelling and timely story with you... A story about acceptance. I look forward to talking with you after the show!

Melanie YC Pepe, Artistic Director

Michael Knobloch.....	Austin
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MICHAEL KNOBLOCH (Austin) is thrilled to be returning to Weathervane Playhouse in his first show in the Dietz Theatre with a brilliant cast made up of some dear old friends and new ones! Recent credits include *Cabaret* (Victor), *Jeckyll & Hyde* (Dr. Henry Jeckyll/Edward Hyde), *Assassins* (John Wilkes Booth), *Next to Normal* (Henry), and *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Boyl Peter). Michael is currently pursuing his Acting Certification with the Great Lakes Michael Chekhov Consortium, and hopes to pursue an MFA in Acting in the future.



BROOKE LYTTON (Marcy) is thrilled to be back in the Dietz Theatre after playing Claire in *Ordinary Days* last season. She is a senior at Kent State University studying psychology. Brooke's favorite credits include playing Mother in *Ragtime*, the Narrator in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, the stepsister Joy in *Cinderella*, and an ensemble member in *Rent*. As always, Brooke wants to thank her family and friends for their love and support.



MATTHEW HEPPE (Jeff) is thrilled to be appearing in his first production with Weathervane. Recently, he has been seen in *A Christmas Carol* (Fred/Young Ebenezer) at the Canton Players Guild Theatre, *The Best Man* (Dick Jensen) with Seat of the Pants Productions, and in *Songs for a New World* with Sima Performing Arts Studio. Some of his favorite credits include *Avenue Q* (Princeton), *Sweeney Todd* (Tobias), *Next to Normal* (Gabe Goodman), and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Seymour). Matthew is currently employed by The Ohio State University at the Stark County Extension Office. When he is not spending copious amounts of time inside a theater, Matthew can typically be found on his family's farm in Randolph. "Thank you for your support of live theatre."



KYLA WILLIGER (Diana) is a S/W/F who enjoys acting out the perils of online dating on stage more than she enjoys living them. Kyla is thrilled to be back at Weathervane playhouse performing with some of her favorite people. She was last seen on Weathervane's stage in

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee. Recent roles have included Amy in *Company* at Brecksville Community Theater, Melissa in *Love Letters* at Western Reserve Playhouse and Linda in *Blood Brothers* in Carnation City Players. When not at the theater, Kyla practices law at Williger Legal Group, makes improvements to her home, and laughs with her wonderfully supportive family and friends.



BENJAMIN KRUMREIG (New York Man) received his Bachelor of Music from the Baldwin Wallace University Conservatory of Music. He then received his Master of Music from the University Of Illinois School Of Music. Well-versed in opera, operetta, and musical theatre, Benjamin's roles include George Gibbs in Ned Rorem's *Our Town*, Arcadio in Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas*, Freddy Eynsford-Hill in Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady*, Fenton in Verdi's *Falstaff*, and Pluto in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*, among others. Benjamin has frequently performed with The Ohio Light Opera. Favorite roles at OLO include Rodney Hatch in Weill's *One Touch of Venus*, Charlie Dalrymple in *Brigadoon*, and Nanki-poo in *The Mikado*. Benjamin currently studies voice with Marc Weagraff in Cleveland, and Mark Schnaible in New York City.



KAITLYN HARRIS (New York Woman) is very excited to be returning to Weathervane for this amazing show! She was most recently seen as April in *Company* and Olive Ostrovsky in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*! Outside of the Theater she owns Maid 2 Sparkle Cleaning Service and works as a Princess for Tiaras and Treasures! You will most likely find her as well as the rest of the cast at Bricco after the show! (Enjoy!)



ASHLEY COLLINS (Stage Manager) is glad to be back with her Weathervane family working on this adorable show after assistant stage managing *The Man Who Came to Dinner* and co-props designing *Vanya and Sonia* and *Masha and Spike* last season. She also stage managed *A Thousand Clowns* at Coach House this past summer (contrary to popular belief, no clowns were involved). "All the love to this fantastic cast; you guys rock! And thanks to my family for your unending support."



WILL C. CROSBY (Director) Originally from Lakewood, Will has worked all over the Cleveland area as an actor, director, and stage manager. Most recently Will was seen as Prince Herbert/ Not-Dead-Fred in Weathervane's production of Monty Python's *Spamalot*, and stage managed this season's *You Can't Take It With You*. Other notable roles include Smee in *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Weathervane), Nicely Nicely Johnson in *Guys and Dolls* (Olmsted Performing Arts), William Barfee in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Huntington Playhouse) and the Cowardly Lion in *The Wizard of Oz* (CAMEO.) Will has worked as the Director of the Garfield Middle School drama program in Lakewood, and has directed for the 2016 8x10 TheaterFest at Weathervane and *Company* in Independence.



JOHN EBNER (Musical Director) has worked extensively as a keyboardist, musical director, and accompanist for the Carousel Dinner Theater, Coach House Theatre, Ohio Shakespeare Festival, Players Guild of Canton, Theatre 8:15, Voices of Canton, Weathervane Playhouse, and Western Reserve Playhouse. He retired from teaching music after 33 years, but continues to work with schools in Stark and Summit counties. John has had some great opportunities over the years including working with Arthur Fiedler and Paul Williams as well as performing at Cleveland's House of Blues. He has won four Chanticleers and a YACTA for his work at the Weathervane. He has also done commercial work with the Cleveland Cavaliers. He has a Master of Music in Education from The University of Akron and is a member of the American Federation of Musicians and Ohio Music Educators Association.



JOSHUA LARKIN (Properties Co-Designer) has previously worked with Weathervane Playhouse in numerous roles, but here serves for the first time as a properties designer. He has previously worked behind the scenes on Weathervane's recent production of *The Santaland Diaries*, and as a director during the 2016 8x10 TheatreFest. A native of Dover, OH, Joshua has appeared on stage in a number of productions in Eastern Ohio, including *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *RED*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *You Can't Take It With You*, and *Bye Bye Birdie*.



JUSTYN TYLER JAYMES (Scenic Co-Designer) is Weathervane's Director of Development. He is a graduate of The University of Akron with an M.A. degree in Arts Administration and of Kent State University with an M.F.A. in Theatre Design. He has also been a designer at Slippery Rock University, Kent State University, Porthouse Theatre and Actors Theatre of Louisville.



JAY SIGLER (Properties Co-Designer) is pleased to be back on the Weathervane stage. He was last seen as Sir Robin in *Spamalot*. He has performed in many shows locally and out of state. His favorites include *Oklahoma!* (Will Parker) at Weathervane, *Forever Plaid* (Sparky), *Hello, Dolly!* (Cornelius Hackl), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Robert Martin) all at Carnation City Players, and The Cat in *Honk!* He also performed in the musical revues *My Way*, *A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra* at Stow Players and *Christmas My Way*, *A Sinatra Holiday Bash* at Weathervane. He is a teacher at Mogadore High School. Go Wildcats! He would like to thank everyone involved for making this a great show! He would also like to thank his friends and family who come see him perform and support community theater.



JASE J. SMITH (Costume Designer) joined the Weathervane professional staff in August 2008. Since then, he's designed costumes for dozens of Weathervane productions. As a co-designer, he and Hedy Jones took home Weathervane's Chanticleer Award for best costume design

for *Man of La Mancha* in 2009. He also won a Marquee Award from the Youngstown Area Community Theatre Association for his work on *Children of Eden*. Elsewhere, his design work has been seen on the stages of Porthouse Theatre, Case Western Reserve University and Ohio Light Opera.



RICHARD MORRIS, JR.

(Technical Director) holds a B.A. in Scenic and Lighting Design from Kent State University. He was the Technical Director/Production Manager for Karamu House Performing Arts Theatre in Cleveland since 1997. He has designed scenery and lighting for over 104 productions and was the recipient of the 2011 National Black Theatre Festival award for "Outstanding Achievements in Scenic Design." In 2013, he was Keynote Speaker at Alabama State University on "African Americans In Scenic Design." Some of Richard's design credits include: *Chad Deity*, *Cut Flowers*, *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men*, *The Color Purple*, *The Bluest Eye*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Ruined*, *God's Trombones*, *Yellowman*, *Caroline or Change*, *Purlie Victorious*, *Holes*, *King Headly II*, *Jar the Floor*, *Bee Luther Hatchee*, *Raisin*, *The Little Tommy Parker Celebrated Colored Minstrel Show*, *Riff Raff*, *Jelly's Last Jam*, *Steal Away* and *The Tap Dance Kid*. For Ensemble Theatre: *The Rabbit Foot*, *Later Life*, and *Meetings on the Porch*. For Oberlin College Theatre: *Blade to*

the Heat and *Omnium Gatherum*, and *TopDog/UnderDog*. Oberlin Lighting Design credits include: *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Macbeth*, *The Compromise*, and *Death of a Salesman*. For Rabbit Run Theatre: *Enchanted April*, *Ragtime*, and *Cemetery Club*. For Weathervane Playhouse: *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Clybourne Park*, *Seven Guitars* and *Mr. Rickey Calls a Meeting*.



KATHY KOHL (Assistant

Technical Director, Scenic Co-Designer) holds a degree in elementary education from Bowling Green State University and a masters degree in business management from Aurora University. She began her theater career at Weathervane as a volunteer on many lighting, set construction and props crews, joining the professional staff in 2002. She also served for seven years as master painter for the theater department at Firestone High School. Most recently, she was scenic co-designer for our productions of *Vanya and Sonia* and *Masha and Spike* and Monty Python's *Spamalot*. In 2015, she was a recipient of the Trustee Award and holds three Chanticleer awards for her properties designs for *Enchanted April*, *The Sisters Rosensweig*, and *The Philadelphia Story*. She lives with her husband, Doug, in West Akron where they raised their three children. When not at Weathervane, she very much enjoys being "Ommie" to Parker, Fiona, Beckett and Maisie.

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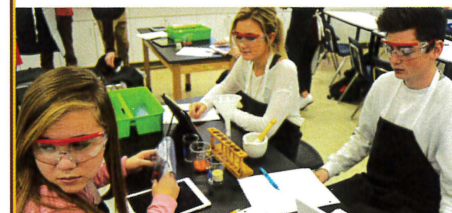
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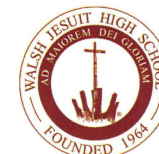
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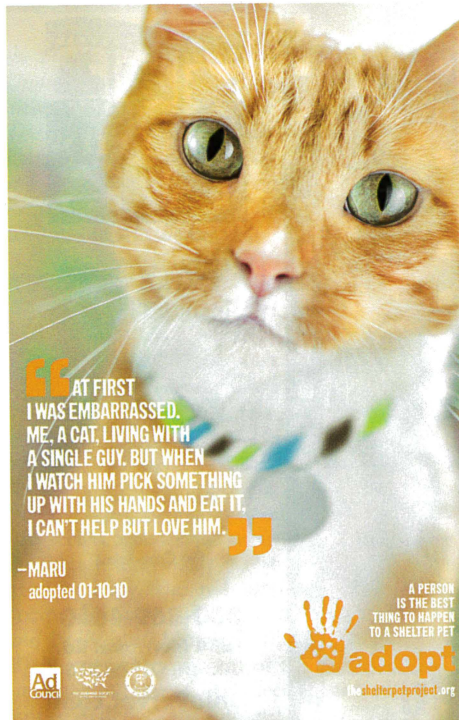
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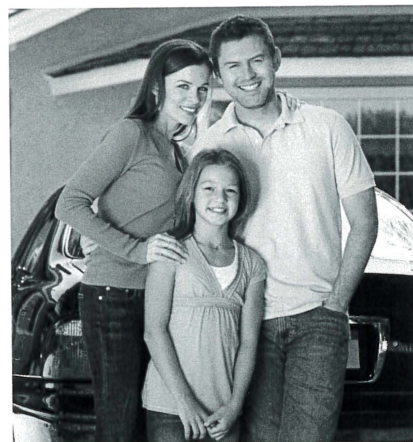
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